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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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(21)

19 April 1962

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE SPECIAL GROUP (AUGMENTED)

From: Brig. Gen. Lansdale *Ed*

Subject: Operation Mongoose, 13-19 April

The following are the significant highlights of Operation Mongoose for the past week:

Tasks. All tasks agreed to at the 11 April meeting in Secretary Rusk's office and the 12 April Special Group meeting have been assigned by the Chief of Operations to Departments and Agencies concerned. The State Department, through Assistant Secretary Ed Martin, requested revision of the "total blockade" tasking to be limited to a CIA estimate of the effects on Cuba of a blockade; the tasking was so changed. Status of these tasks will be included in my report to the Special Group next week, when I plan to attend the meeting.

Prisoner Ransom. The Chief of Operations met with State and CIA representatives to work on problems arising from Castro's proposed \$62 million ransom deal for prisoners. State agreed to contact James Fusca, the New York public relations advisor to the Cuban Families Committee, so that consideration is afforded the propaganda impact of public appearances for Brigade fund raising, suggesting that the theme be in terms of the fight for recapturing human freedom and national independence rather than in terms of disabled Cubans to whom the U.S. owes a debt of guilt.

(USIA reports that local reaction

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in 11 Latin American countries is strongly negative to a deal with Castro, with the consensus that the U.S. government should ignore Castro's efforts to "sell human beings.")

The threat of splintering refugee groups over the purpose of their organization, in turn, raises the problem of what the U.S. desires the CRC to be: a central refugee organization with mainly non-political goals, or a central organization of Cuban political-military actionists for liberating their homeland.

Reports of New "Invaders." The New York Times this morning reported a group of Cubans training in the U.S. for guerrilla operations. This is one of several news stories published recently and is an expected outcome of the restlessness of Cuban refugee groups. CIA cited a Chattanooga news item along the same line in its weekly summary. (CIA can report on the facts and meaning of this verbally to the Group.)

Agent Actions. Upon the return of Mr. Harvey from his current field visit, more specific information on the status of agent training and operations should be available. The CIA Progress Report this week notes that maritime actions to infiltrate two agent teams into Cuba and exfiltrate one team were unsuccessful.

"Eyes Only" of

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